



EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT NEWS

The Monthly Electronic Newsletter of
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Portsmouth's new Fire Boat 1 showing off its pumping capacity in Portsmouth Harbor.
Photo by Don Bliss.

PORTSMOUTH CHRISTENS NEW FIRE BOAT – The Portsmouth Fire Department has a new fire boat. The state-of-the-art craft, named the Sagamore, is a 34-foot Metalcraft Firestorm-30, capable of traveling at high speeds on the open ocean and inshore. It has a fully enclosed pilot house and can be used for firefighting and rescue work. The boat is equipped with twin 380 HP diesel engines. Its pumps can deliver more than 2,500 gallons per minute. The Sagamore was purchased with a \$350,000 Homeland Security grant. It replaces a 24-foot open boat that had served as the city's fireboat since 1983. Federal law originally did not allow the use of Homeland Security grants to pay for boats. The law was later changed.

SENATORS PREDICT ANOTHER TERRORIST ATTACK – Two prominent former U.S. Senators who have spent years studying terrorism are predicting another attack on the U.S. homeland that will be on the same scale as the September 11th, 2001, attack. Former U.S. Senators Warren Rudman, a New Hampshire Republican, and Gary Hart, a Colorado Democrat, made the comments at a forum on October 18th at Southern N.H. University, sponsored by the N.H. Council on World Affairs. The senators co-chaired a study committee on terrorism in the 1990s that warned of a September 11th-style attack several years before it occurred. They noted that no one paid much attention to their report – until September 12th. They also said the U.S. has spent enough money and effort on airport security. The biggest threat to the U.S., they said, was lack of security at seaports, especially minimal inspections of cargo containers.

Rudman and Hart also criticized the Department of Homeland Security, which they said was badly organized and too bureaucratic. They said that when the Department of Defense was organized in 1947, the individual services retained their identities and command structures. They said FEMA should be autonomous within DHS in the same way.

DIRECTOR POPE APPEARS BEFORE SENATE SUBCOMMITTEE –Homeland Security and Emergency Director Christopher M. Pope appeared before a Senate Subcommittee on October 3rd, speaking on New Hampshire's preparedness to respond to a public health emergency. Director Pope was invited to speak to the State, Local and Private Sector Preparedness and Integration Subcommittee of the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee by U.S. Senator John Sununu, the ranking Republican.

He told the panel that, because New Hampshire is a small state it relies heavily on cooperation among state agencies, especially the Departments of Safety and Health and Human Services, and with local officials and private entities, such as hospitals. He described the functions of the 19 all-health hazard regions in the state and the Strategic National Stockpile exercise conducted last April.

HOOKSETT'S AL DIONNE IS EMD OF THE YEAR – Hooksett Emergency Management Director Al Dionne is New Hampshire's Emergency Management Director of the year for 2006. Director Christopher M. Pope presented Dionne with a plaque from the Northeast States Emergency Consortium at a Town Council meeting on October 24th.

Dionne was nominated for the award by Senior Field Representative Nancy St. Laurent. She cited his effective leadership when much of Hooksett was inundated during the Mother's Day flood in 2006. She said Dionne kept the state EOC updated with conditions in the town and helped coordinate federal assistance to flood victims. During normal operations, Dionne updated the town's Emergency Operations Plan with a Terrorism Annex and Hazard Mitigation Plan and he continues to look for grants to improve the community's emergency preparedness. Congratulations to Al!

ALLENSTOWN FLOOD VICTIMS GET VOLUNTEER HELP – More than 20 teens from the Youth Board of the American Red Cross, Granite Chapter; N.H. Catholic Charities and the Boy Scouts spent Saturday, September 28th, cleaning up flood debris in Allentown. The youths and local residents of the Riverside Drive neighborhood collected over eight tons of garbage and debris from roads, riverbeds and lawns. The neighborhood was flooded twice in 18 months, in the Mother's Day flood of 2006 and the April Nor'easter this year. The cleanup was organized by members of the Belknap-Merrimack Regional Disaster Recovery Steering Committee.

FEMA REPORT ON VY EXERCISE FAVORABLE – Federal Emergency Management officials have given a favorable review of this month's Vermont Yankee graded exercise. The preliminary assessment came during a meeting October 23rd in Vernon, Vt., with emergency management officials from Massachusetts, New Hampshire and Vermont. Radiological Assistance Chair Susan Porell noted that 540 exercise criteria were observed by 72 evaluators at 27 locations in the three states and only about a dozen issues surfaced that may need to be addressed by additional training or revised procedures. A final report on the exercise will be issued in about 90 days.

RIVIER COLLEGE HOLDS CRISIS PLANNING FORUM – Rivier College in Nashua kicked off its new President's Circle of forums on public issues October 24th with a half-day program on crisis planning for private sector executives. The program featured a panel discussion on developing emergency response and recovery plans for the private sector. Participants encouraged the audience of about 100 to develop back-up facilities and ensure that their employees are prepared to protect themselves and their families during emergencies. Douglas Dickson, Vice Rector of St. Paul's School in Concord, presented a case study of the prep school's response to the Mother's Day flood of 2006, which caused about \$5 million in damage and forced it to close four weeks early. HSEM Director Christopher M. Pope was the keynote speaker.

HELP IS ON THE WAY FOR MEDICAL SHELTERING – In June of this year the State Functional Needs Committee released its *State Functional Needs Guidance*, providing a framework across all emergency planning for addressing the functional needs of people during emergencies. That document pointed out that the American Red Cross, on whom many rely for sheltering, does not provide medical sheltering. The Guidance is a helpful reminder of which functional needs populations may need to be in a medical shelter. Now a Medical Sheltering Workgroup of the Functional Needs Committee is working to develop planning templates, resources, and other tools for cities and towns to develop their own plans. The final report from that workgroup is tentatively due late spring or early summer of 2008. Municipalities should continue developing medical sheltering plans to be ready to help vulnerable people through the winter and spring. The *State Functional Needs Guidance* is available on the HSEM website.